

Draft

Collaborative Planning and The U.S. Bureau of Land Management

Analysis and Recommendations

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Executive Summary

This report summarizes findings from a survey administered to BLM field office managers and planners in Fall 2002 on collaborative planning. At least one field office in every western state is engaged in some form of collaboration. Despite frustrations about the lack of time or budgetary flexibility, staff are utilizing collaborative planning processes and initiating collaborative arrangements. In part, they believe that collaboration helps limit future problems, create common ground, and provide a forum for diverse stakeholders to share ideas and understand others' perspectives. As one respondent remarked, collaboration "increases overall understanding of [the] BLM's situation, goals and abilities. [And it] allows BLM to better understand others needs/expectations" (R. 92). However, some respondents did suggest that collaboration may not be applicable in all situations. According to one respondent, "depending on the scope, scale constraints, level of decision, and intent of the planning initiative, collaborative planning may not be the process of choice" (R. 23). Based on the results discussed in the report, it is apparent that until real changes are made to planning budgets and time schedules, and a greater degree of agreement is reached within the agency as to what collaboration is and what it can produce, it is likely to remain a process that is not agency-wide but adopted by those offices where there are committed people willing to take the time and risks to make it happen.

Major Themes from the Findings

The major themes from the findings are presented in four sections which correspond to the survey: 1) intergovernmental coordination, 2) collaborative planning processes and arrangements, 3) effectiveness of collaboration (e.g., strengths and weaknesses) and 4) agency capacity for collaboration.

Part 1: Intergovernmental Coordination

Field offices are actively involved in intergovernmental coordination, especially with respect to operating activities (e.g., wildlife management, search and rescue, road maintenance), land use and infrastructure planning (e.g., location of new roads, recreation trails, communication sties), and administrative and procedural issues (e.g., coordinating agency on EA/EIS, identifying resource and data needs). Offices are less likely to coordinate with other government entities on open space planning (e.g., urban growth management, farm/ranch land preservation) or leasing lands for community facilities through the recreation and public purposes program. Field offices coordinate these various activities most often with county, state and other federal agencies. In a few cases, field offices coordinated with cities, local governing bodies (e.g., special districts) and Native American tribes.

According to the literature on collaboration, it is likely that field offices with past experience with coordination and collaboration will tend to engage in collaboration in the future (Gray 1985). Prior interactions provide information about other entities in terms of their reliability, capabilities and trustworthiness (Gulati, Daldin, and Wang 2002). Furthermore, Cigler (1994) found that the degree of practical experience gained in formal and informal inter-organizational coordination and cooperation increases the readiness of institutions to engage in future collaborative efforts (Cigler 1994). Based on these previous findings, it seems that

BLM field offices may have a relatively high level of institutional readiness for continued engagement in collaboration, particularly with other government entities.

Part 2: Collaborative Planning Processes and Arrangements

Collaborative arrangements in which BLM field offices participate, were assessed according to structure, process and participation characteristics. In terms of structural characteristics, nearly three-quarters were started by field offices or in conjunction with another entity, the majority were community-based, and they tended to be moderate in size (11-20 participants). Process-wise, they were split equally in terms of level of formality, and the majority made decisions by consensus. Generally, goals were social and project-oriented, and groups focused on watershed health, water quality, and wildlife habitat. The primary data types used in collaborative processes included resource inventory, spatial and on-going monitoring; data primarily came from within the agency, state and other federal agencies. Spatial data were used for developing maps for public meetings and planning documents, and for resource and NEPA analysis. The geographic scope in nearly 75% of groups extended beyond administrative boundaries. With respect to participation, most stakeholders joined through self-selection, and the breadth of participation was diverse.

Three findings from the collaborative arrangements section warrant additional comments: participation, goals and issues.

A) Participation

Based on survey results, field offices appear to be successfully engaging a wide variety of participants in the collaborative planning processes. There was, however, some disagreement among respondents with respect to group size. Some argued for extensive processes (open to board group of stakeholders) while others for more intensive ones (limited to specific stakeholders). According to the literature, staff might consider focusing less on the actual number of attendees, and more on ensuring that stakeholders reflect the complexity of the issue (Luke 1998). Luke also suggests that it is not necessary for all stakeholders to participate to the same degree. Therefore, field offices may consider developing various levels of participation opportunities for stakeholders.

B) Goals

The collaborative planning arrangements discussed by survey respondents tended to focus on social and project-oriented goals rather than planning-oriented goals. This finding suggests that goals may be associated with stages, which falls in line both with what survey respondents stated in open-ended questions and with what others have found (Lachapelle, McCool, and Patterson 2003). It appears necessary for groups to focus first on building trust, reducing conflict and engaging participants in on-the-ground projects before attempting to develop plans and policies. Responses to open-ended questions corroborate these findings. Respondents mentioned the need to spend time initially bringing participants “up to speed” and building trust between the agency and the public before beginning to work on the issues at hand. Lachapelle et al (2003) suggested a similar explanation stating that it is important to first “encourage the potential for people to practice civic means of association, stressing dialogue and relationship building” prior to addressing complex problems. Thus it appears

that collaborative process goals occur in stages; first stage goal are social and project-oriented, while second stage goals are planning-oriented.

C) Issues

This research found that groups tend to focus on certain types of issues. A large majority of collaborative planning arrangements focused on locally specific issues (e.g., water quality, livestock grazing) that could be addressed at the local level with on-the-ground projects. Groups focused less on issues like energy development and air quality, which tend to be influenced by regional or national activities and impacted by decisions made in places far removed from any particular field office. These findings suggest that some issues may be more applicable to collaboration than others.

Part 3: Effectiveness of Collaboration

Effectiveness was measured in terms of strengths and weaknesses of collaboration, as well as respondent satisfaction with outcomes. Strengths of collaboration included: avoidance of future problems, creation of common ground, production of politically supported and higher-quality outputs, relationship building, joint learning and the development of a sense of ownership in the process and products. Respondents also described numerous weaknesses of collaboration; specifically, they mentioned concerns about the process itself, its definition, explicit and hidden agendas, and reaching consensus. Others mentioned weaknesses related to participation in terms of involvement, commitment and power. General weaknesses included time and lack of funding, and relations between field offices and local communities, and field offices and state and national offices. When asked to describe their level of satisfaction with outputs from the process, overall, respondents tended to be satisfied with both product (e.g., plans, amendments) and process-oriented (e.g., trust, conflict resolution) outputs.

Part 4: Capacity for Collaboration

This final section discusses findings regarding the agency's capacity to initiate and sustain collaborative planning processes and provides specific recommendations for both field offices and state and national offices. There appear to be three issues that may hinder field offices' ability to effectively integrate and utilize collaboration in planning processes. These issues, defined as gaps, are: political vs. material support, intra-agency relations (national/state office – field office), and field office – community relations.

Gap 1: Political vs. Material Support

Collaboration has received much verbal support in recent BLM publications (e.g., *Handbook for Land Use Planning*), from upper administrators in the agency, and from the Secretary's Office in the Department of Interior, however there appears to be little material support. If collaborative planning is to be utilized, staff stated they need more time, greater budget flexibility, additional training and genuine support from state and national offices.

Gap 2: Intra-Agency Relations

Field office staff perceive a lack of real understanding in the state and national offices as to what collaborative planning is and what is required to implement it at the field office level. Another issue regarding interagency relations has to do with decision-making power. A

number of respondents mentioned a concern related to the agency's hierarchical decision-making structure. They are concerned that staff at the state and national offices, who are not engaged in the collaborative process, have veto-power over decisions made at the field office level. This decision-making authority has the potential not only to erode intra-agency trust, but also trust developed between field office staff and local stakeholders.

Gap 3: Field office – Community Relations

While many field offices have developed good working relationships with local stakeholders, there remains widespread misunderstanding about agency legal responsibilities and mistrust of the agency. Another issue discussed by field office staff was local communities' capacity to engage in collaborative processes. Concerns were raised in terms of limited local knowledge about issues, difficult personalities (e.g., unwillingness to see others' perspectives), and staff/elected official transitions in local government participants due to elections and job changes.

Recommendations for Field Office/District Level Staff:

Bridging the Support Gap:

- Work with State and National Office staff to revise planning budgets and planning schedules to reflect the demands and realities of collaborative planning processes.

Bridging the Intra-Agency Gap:

- Communicate experiences to State and National level administrators through presentations and evaluative reports.

Bridging the Field Office-Community Relations Gap

- Use workshops and field trips to educate participants.
- Keep stakeholders updated on the process (e.g., newsletters, emails) and "reward" them for their participation (e.g., provide food at meetings).
- Participate in community activities and events; hold local positions (e.g., school board).

Recommendations for State and National Level Staff

Bridging the Support Gap:

- Provide training in collaboration and facilitation for staff at all levels of the agency.
- Provide Field Office staff with budgetary discretion for collaborative processes.

Bridging the Intra-Agency Gap:

- Participate in a collaborative planning process to gain first-hand experience.

Bridging the Field Office-Community Gap

- Develop a "handbook" for community participants that describes agency legal responsibilities and other information that would inform citizens about the agency's planning processes.

Background

Over the last century, U.S. federal public lands and natural resources management has shifted from emphasizing central authority and scientific management to focusing on community-based partnerships and ecosystem management. In contrast to traditional resource management, ecosystem management stresses collaborative decision-making based on holistic and integrative science, where goals and management objectives are determined by social values, and adaptability is stressed to attain healthy, diverse and productive public lands (Cortner 1998; Grumbine 1994). A key element to implementing ecosystem management is cooperative or coordinated planning between various public and private stakeholders to address issues of joint concern. Recent BLM publications show that the agency is interested in incorporating collaborative planning and working cooperative with local governments and communities to address complex and cross-boundary issues (U.S. Bureau 1994; U.S. Bureau 2000a). The latest *Land Use Planning Handbook* (U.S. Bureau 2000b) includes a "Guide to Collaborative Planning," which outlines how to increase public participation, initiate multi-jurisdictional planning, and form collaborative partnerships. The Handbook (2000b) encourages staff to use collaborative planning, and describes numerous potential benefits, including "improving communication, developing a greater understanding of different perspectives, and finding solutions to issues and problems" (I-4), however, it does not require nor mandate its use. Anecdotal evidence shows that some field offices in the BLM are adopting collaborative planning and forming natural resource partnerships with various stakeholders (SI 1999; U.S. Bureau 2000a); however, a systematic study has not yet assessed the extent to which field offices are adopting these processes. This report examines the BLM's experience with collaborative planning from the perspective of field office managers and planners.

This report is divided into three sections: Research Methods, Findings, and Discussion. The first part describes the method used to collect data for this project. The findings section reviews survey results. The third part concludes with a discussion of the findings and provides both assessment of current BLM practices and recommendations for actions to increase the application of collaborative planning within BLM decision-making processes.

Part I: Research Method

To gauge the degree to which collaborative planning was being utilized in BLM field offices, an online survey was administered to field office managers and planners in Fall 2002.¹ The survey, which consisted of structured and open-ended questions, addressed: 1) intergovernmental coordination (e.g., linkages with other governmental entities for planning and administrative activities), 2) characteristics of collaborative arrangements and 3) general questions on collaborative planning (e.g., strengths and weaknesses) (See Appendix A for survey). Contact information for all 147 BLM Field Office Managers was obtained from the BLM's Washington, D.C.-based Office of Planning, Assessment, and Community Support. Field managers were initially contacted by letter, which introduced the project. A week later, they received an email with a link to the online survey.² Reminder emails were sent two weeks later. In all, 126 BLM staff from 84 field offices responded to the online survey,

¹ Justification for online survey: all field office staff have web access; BLM's National Training Center staff have achieved good response rates with method; it is economical; it reduces data entry time & coding error since results are downloaded directly into Excel.

² Since direct email contact was not available for planners, field managers were asked to forward the email to planners in their office.

generating a 57% response rate.³ Table 1 shows the number of responses by state, and the number of field offices with responses by state.

Table 1: Number of Survey Responses by State & Field Offices by State

State	Responses/ST	%	Field Office/ST	%
Alaska	5	4	4	5
Arizona	7	5	5	6
California	12	10	10	12
Colorado	17	14	11	13
Idaho	7	5	6	7
Montana*	12	10	8	9
Nevada	5	4	4	5
New Mexico**	9	7	4	5
Oregon***	27	21	17	20
Utah	10	8	4	5
Wyoming	15	12	8	9
Missing Data			3	4
TOTAL	126	100	84	100

* Includes one respondent from a field office in North Dakota.

** Includes one respondent from a field office in Oklahoma.

*** Includes three respondents from field offices in Washington.

Part II: Research Findings

The findings section is divided into three parts. The first reviews the level of intergovernmental coordination and planning the BLM is engaged in with other government entities. The next section presents descriptive analysis of collaborative arrangements (e.g., structural, process and participation characteristics) in which the BLM is an integral part. The third part is evaluative. It covers both respondents' perspectives on the effectiveness of collaboration as well as an analysis of the BLM's capacity to engage in and sustain collaborative processes and partnerships.

A. Intergovernmental Coordination and Planning

The survey began with a series of questions related to intergovernmental coordination and planning. The purpose of this section was to gauge the extent to which field offices were coordinating with other government entities in a variety of activities, including: operations (e.g., road maintenance, search and rescue), land use and infrastructure planning (e.g., location of new roads and development, land exchanges), open space planning (e.g., recreation, species habitat), and recreation and public purposes (e.g., landfill, park, campground). A final area considered administrative and procedural coordination (e.g., data collection, information management, education and outreach).

Overall, survey data show that BLM field offices coordinate numerous activities with other governmental entities⁴. For example, in terms of operating capacity, 77% of survey respondents stated that their field office coordinated with at least one other government entity on 7 to 9 of the activities listed under operating capacities (see Appendix A, survey question 1A for a list of the 9 areas). The operating capacity activities where over 50% of survey respondents stated that their office coordinated with between 1 and 3 entities are listed in Table 2. For example, 75% of the respondents stated that their office coordinated wildlife

³ Respondent Job Categories: Field Manager (47%), Asst. Manager (7%), Planner (35%), Natural Resource Mngt. Specialist (11%).

⁴ Other governmental entities that the BLM may coordinate with are: city, county, local (e.g., special district), state, Native American tribe or other federal agencies.

management with at least one other government unit. BLM field offices coordinated most often with the state on this activity.

Table 2: Operations Coordination**

Operation Activities	% Survey Respondents (n=126)*	Primary Coordinating Entity
Wildlife Management	75	State
Search & Rescue	66	County
Road Maintenance	64	County
Weed Control	57	County
Law Enforcement	56	County
Trail & Campground Maint.	53	Other Federal

* Percentage based on coordination with 1-3 other entities.

** Total exceeds 100% because respondents could select more than one option.

In terms of intergovernmental coordination for land use and infrastructure planning, there were 11 areas within which respondents could select the governmental entities with which they coordinate activities. Seventy-one percent of respondents stated that their offices coordinate with at least one other entity on 8 to 11 of the possible land use and infrastructure planning activities (see Appendix A, survey question 1B for a list of the 11 areas). Table 3 outlines the areas where over 50% of respondents stated that their offices coordinate with between 1 and 4 other entities; it also shows the entity with which their office is most likely to work. Looking at row 1, 60% of BLM field offices coordinated with at least one other governmental unit for determining the location of new roads. In this case, field offices coordinated most often with county governments.

Table 3: Land Use & Infrastructure Planning Coordination**

Land Use & Infrast. Planning	% Survey Respondents (n=126)*	Primary Coordinating Entity
Location of New Roads	60	County
Location of Recreation Trails	60	County
Location of Communication Sites	58	County
Location of Utility Corridors	53	Other Federal
Location of Mineral Extraction	53	County
Land Exchange	52	County
Wildfire Plan	51	State

* Percentage based on coordination with 1-4 other entities

** Total exceeds 100% because respondents could select more than one option.

Another category for intergovernmental coordination is “open space planning.” This is an area where BLM offices were less likely to participate. Eighteen percent of respondents did not select any of the five areas under this category; while just over half (56%) stated that their office coordinated with other entities on 3 to 5 of these areas (see Appendix A, question 1C for a list of the 5 areas). The only area where over half of the BLM offices coordinate with between 1 and 4 other entities was recreational planning and management (61%); the primary entity with which they coordinated was the county (note: there is no table associated with this finding).

The BLM has a program called “Recreation and Public Purposes,” which allows other units of government to lease or purchase land from the agency for community facilities (e.g., parks, schools, fairgrounds, etc.) (see Appendix A, question 1D for a complete list of the community facilities). Based on survey responses, it does not appear that many of the field offices were actively engaged in this program. The two most prominent community facilities that were provided for under the RPP program were landfills and parks; counties have been

the primary entity leasing or purchasing land for these activities (note: there is no table associated with this finding).

A final series of coordination questions addressed 9 areas of administrative and procedural coordination. Based on survey responses, 71% of field offices coordinated with at least one other entity on 7 to 9 of the areas (see Appendix A, question 2A for a list of these areas). Those areas where over half of the BLM field offices coordinated with between 1 and 3 other entities are listed in Table 4, as well as the government entity with which they most often coordinate.

Table 4: Administration & Procedural Coordination**

Admin/Procedural Arrangement	% Survey Respondents (n=126)*	Primary Coordinating Entity
Coordinating Agency on EA/EIS	64	Other Federal
Identify Resource & Data Needs	53	Other Federal
Joint Information Management	53	Other Federal
Information Exchange	49	State & Other Federal

* Percentage based on coordination with 1-3 other entities

** Total exceeds 100% because respondents could select more than one option.

The survey also asked respondents if their field office participated in the federal “Service First” program, described as a “BLM-Forest Service innovation to create seamless service for citizens” (<http://www.fs.fed.us/servicefirst/service-first.doc>). Just under half (49%) of survey respondents stated that their office participated in this program; 33% stated that their office did not, and 18% were not sure.

To summarize intergovernmental coordination, survey responses indicate that BLM field offices coordinate a number of activities with other government units ranging from basic operational activities to land use planning and administration. However, they tend to coordinate more often on operating activities and land use and infrastructure planning than on open space planning. The primary units of government with which the BLM coordinated most often were counties, state departments and other federal agencies. To a lesser extent, some offices coordinated with cities, local governing bodies (e.g., special districts) and Native American tribes. In the following section, findings from BLM field offices’ experiences with collaborative arrangements are described; these arrangements include not only other governmental entities, but non-governmental actors as well.

B. Collaborative Arrangement Characteristics

According to survey respondents, 40 of the 84 field offices (48%) were engaged in a total of 47 collaborative arrangements⁵. Table 5 divides these collaborative arrangements by the states in which they occurred.

Table 5: Collaborative Arrangements by State

State	No. Arrangements/State	Total
Arizona, Utah, Washington	1	3
Idaho, Montana, Nevada	3	9
California	4	4
Colorado, New Mexico	5	10
Wyoming	8	8
Oregon	13	13
TOTAL		47

⁵ In a couple of offices, two staff reported on different collaboratives in which they had participated.

The collaborative arrangements are described according to their structure (e.g., initiation, type, group size), process (e.g., goals, focus, formality, decision-making, geographic scope) and participation (e.g., participant involvement and type) characteristics. Findings for this section of the report are based on responses from 47 survey participants who answered “yes” to the question: *Is your office participating in a collaborative planning process, not associated with a RAC?*⁶ Those who answered “yes” were directed to a section of the survey that covered question on collaborative planning processes. Those who answered “no” were taken to the final section of the survey, which had open-ended questions about the general strengths and weaknesses of collaboration.

Structure: Initiation, Type, and Group Size

Structurally, the collaborative arrangements in which BLM field offices are engaged vary in terms of their initiator, type and group size. The majority (73%) of the collaborative arrangements described by survey respondents were either started by the BLM field office, or in conjunction with another entity, such as a local government or non-profit organization⁷. In many cases, field offices may have turned to collaboration because traditional planning processes failed to produce outcomes that the majority of stakeholders were satisfied with (Wondolleck 2000). This was the case, for example, with the Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership, a collaborative process started by the Tucson, Arizona BLM Field Office. Staff initiated the process after experiencing fierce opposition to a plan developed through a traditional planning process (Laniga 2002).

To determine the arrangement type respondents were asked to select one of the following definitions that best reflected their collaborative: *community-based*, described as a watershed council, dialogue group or partnership focused on more than one problem or issue and has open membership; *intergovernmental*, defined as a cooperative or coordinated process between two or more governmental entities for information exchange, joint planning and/or joint implementation of plans or projects; or *mediated negotiation*, a process facilitated by a neutral party to resolve specific disputes, where participation is limited to representatives of groups involved in the dispute. Table 6 shows that 64% of the arrangements were characterized as community-based, 17% as intergovernmental, and 2% as mediated negotiations. In 15% of the cases, arrangements were described as a combination of community-based and intergovernmental, these are referred to here as “hybrids.”

Table 6: Collaborative Arrangements by Type

Arrangement Type	Cases (%) (n=47)
Community-Based	64
Intergovernmental	17
Hybrid	15
Other*	4
Total	100

* “Other” includes the mediated negotiation process and one missing case.

⁶ A community-based, collaborative planning process is defined here as a cooperative process in which diverse stakeholders work together to seek solutions to resource management issues involving public lands.

⁷ Seventy percent of the arrangements were started prior to the year 2000, the earliest beginning in 1978.

The size of collaborative arrangements varies greatly, ranging from five participants to over forty regular attendees. Thirty percent of the arrangements had between 1-10 participants, 40% had between 11-20, and 28% had between 21-30.

Process: Formality, Decision-Making, Goals, Focus, Data Types and Sources, and Geographic Scope

This section reviews collaborative arrangements based on their level of formality, decision-making mechanism, goals, issue foci, types of data used and their sources, and geographic scope. In terms of formality, defined as having signed memoranda of understanding or other legally binding agreements, the arrangements were almost evenly divided. Forty-three percent were described as formal, 41% as informal, and 11% were considered a mixture of both. With respect to decision-making, nearly 75% of the cases relied on consensus, while 12% utilized other means (e.g., majority vote or a combination of consensus and voting)⁸.

Collaborative arrangements often have several goals. In the survey, respondents were asked to rank a number of goals as primary, secondary, or not applicable. As shown in Table 7, the goals of building trust and resolving conflict were considered primary for 65% and 46% of the cases, respectively. Developing resource management or land use plans, amendments to existing plans, and policy were less often selected as primary goals, while over half of the respondents stated that implementing on-the-ground projects was a primary aim for their collaborative.

Table 7: Percentage of "Primary" Goals*

Type of Goal	Primary Goal	Cases (%)
Social-Oriented	Building Trust	65
	Resolving Conflict	46
Planning-Oriented	Land Use Plan	36
	Resource Management Plan	28
	Develop Policy	16
	Amend Existing Plan	12
Project-Oriented	On-the-Ground Project	52

*Total exceeds 100% because respondents could select more than one option.

In addition to considering goals, the survey queried respondents on the types of issues being addressed. Major foci for groups, noted in Table 8, included watershed health, water quality, wildlife habitat, rangeland health, livestock grazing, and endangered animal species. The table also indicates foci that were identified as less important, which included: energy and mineral development, wildfire, air quality, and timber harvest.

Table 8: Major & Minor Foci for Collaborative Arrangements*

Major Foci	Cases (%)	Minor or Not a Focus	Cases (%)
Watershed Health	84	Energy Development	87
Water Quality	70	Mineral Development	65
Wildlife Habitat	64	Wildfire	52
Rangeland Health	52	Air Quality	50
Livestock Grazing	48	Timber Harvest	44
Endangered Animal Species	46		

*Total exceeds 100% because respondents could select more than one option.

Another aspect of the process that the survey queried respondents on was the types of data used in the collaborative process, the sources of this data, whether spatial processing

⁸ Sixteen percent of respondents did not know what mechanism was used for making decisions.

software was used, and what uses the spatial data was applied to. Beginning with types of data used, Table 9 shows that the primary data type is resource inventory data; both spatial data and data collected from on-going monitoring are also important sources. Fewer offices utilized data from interviews, local value survey and focus groups, as is shown in the last three rows in the table.

Table 9: Types of Data Used in Collaborative Processes*

Data Type (No. of respondents/47)**	Cases (%)
Resource Inventory (n=45)	96
Spatial (n=40)	85
On-going Monitoring (n=40)	85
Socio/Economic (n=30)	64
Interview (n=22)	47
Local Value Survey (n=21)	45
Focus Group (n=14)	30

*Total exceeds 100% because respondents could select more than one option.

** Number of respondents differ because not every field office utilizes the same types of data

In terms of data sources, field offices generally rely on internally generated data, as well as data from county, state, and other federal agencies. In some cases, field offices get data from environmental groups, universities, citizen groups and commodity groups. In a few instances, data used comes from city governments and Native American tribes. See Table 10 for a breakdown of these numbers.

Table 10: Types of Data Used in Collaborative Processes*

Data Type (No. of respondents/47)**	Cases (%)
Internal (n=41)	87
State (n=39)	83
Federal (n=37)	79
County (n=32)	68
Environmental Group (n=28)	60
University (n=27)	57
Citizen Group (n=23)	49
Commodity Group (n=20)	43
City (n=17)	36
Native American tribe (n=13)	28

*Total exceeds 100% because respondents could select more than one option.

** Number of respondents differ because not every field office utilizes the same types of data

There are three main spatial softwares being utilized by field offices to store, organize and analyze data: ArcVIEW, ArcINFO, and ArcGIS. Table 11 shows the percentages of respondents who stated that their offices were utilizing these spatial software programs.

Table 11: Spatial Processing Software*

Data Type (No. of respondents/47)**	Cases (%)
ArcVIEW (n=24)	51
ArcINFO (n=30)	64
ArcGIS (n=21)	45

*Total exceeds 100% because respondents could select more than one option.

** Number of respondents differ because not every field office utilizes the same types of data

Spatial data are being applied to a number of different planning process activities, including map preparation for public meetings and planning documents, analysis of resources, and NEPA analysis as shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Activities that Spatial Data are used for*

Data Type (No. of respondents/47)**	Cases (%)
Preparing Maps for Public Meetings (n=41)	87
Resource Analysis (n=37)	79
Preparing Maps for Planning Docs (n=36)	77
NEPA Analysis (n=33)	70
Decision Support (n=29)	62
Alternative Formulation (n=28)	60
Issue Scoping (n=24)	51
Interactive Visualization (n=20)	43

*Total exceeds 100% because respondents could select more than one option.

** Number of respondents differ because not every field office utilizes the same types of data

The last process characteristic considered is the geographic scope or scale at which collaborative are focused. Responses showed that ecosystem management, which stresses the importance of managing in accordance to ecological boundaries rather than administrative borders (Grumbine 1994), has influenced field office's planning scope. Only 11% of the cases limited their focus to the BLM's administrative boundary. Consistent with ecosystem-based management, over 70% addressed issues from a regional or watershed scale (note: there is no table associated with this finding).

Participation: Involvement and Representation

A final collaborative arrangement characteristic assessed in the survey was participation. Questions addressed who participated and how they become involved. In 40% of the groups, stakeholders participated because they were interested in the outcome (e.g., self-selection); while in 27%, stakeholders were assigned. In another 27% of arrangements, members joined through a combination of means including self-selection, assignment, and invitation or recruitment by BLM staff. In only one case were persons elected to be a member of the group (note: there is no table associated with this finding).

Stakeholders in collaborative arrangements included federal, state and local government staff, members of Native American Tribal Organizations, elected officials, private organization representatives and individuals. Table 13 shows the primary participants from each category. Looking at column 1, 55% of the arrangements included staff from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), 47% had staff from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS); Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) staff were involved in 30% and 20% of the groups, respectively. The table also lists the most often represented state and local government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and individuals. Native American Tribes participated in about a quarter of the collaboratives.

Table 13: Primary Organizations Represented in Collaborative Arrangements

Federal Agencies (%)	State Agencies (%)	Local Agencies (%)	Private Orgs & Ind. (%)
USFS (55)	State Fish & Wildlife (75)	County Commissioners (64)	Local Env'tal. Groups (70)
USFWS (47)	State Lands Department (32)	Resource Conservation Dist. (34)	General Public (64)
NRCS (30)	Water Resources (26)	Cooperative Ext. Service (32)	Ranchers (57)
EPA (20)	Dept. of Forestry (26)	Weed Control Districts (25)	National Env'tal. Groups (47)
	Dept. of Agriculture (21)		Resource Industry (43)

To gauge how representative collaborative arrangements were, the numerous participants were collapsed into fifteen stakeholder types to measure the breadth of participation⁹ (see Table 14). Groups tended to have a fairly representative participant base, with 53% having 5 to 9 stakeholder types present, and 36% of arrangements having 10 or more.

Table 14: Breadth of Participation

Breadth of Participation	Cases (%) (n=45)
Low (less than 5)	11
Medium (5 to 9)	53
High (10 or more)	36
Total	100

In an effort to increase stakeholder participation, BLM offices have employed a number of techniques. The top four included: field trips, meeting at different times and/or places, holding informational workshops, and sending email updates.

At this point, it is helpful to summarize the arrangement characteristics described above. In terms of structural characteristics, nearly three-quarters were started by field offices or in conjunction with another entity, the majority were community-based, and they tended to be moderate in size (11-20 participants). Process-wise, they were split equally in terms of level of formality, and the majority made decisions by consensus. Generally, goals were social and project-oriented, and groups focused on watershed health, water quality, and wildlife habitat. The primary data types used in collaborative processes include resource inventory, spatial and on-going monitoring; data come primarily from within the agency, state and other federal agencies. Spatial data are used for developing maps for public meetings and planning documents, and for resource and NEPA analysis. The geographic scope in nearly 75% of groups extended beyond administrative boundaries. Most stakeholders joined through self-selection, and the breadth of participation was high. The final findings section is evaluative. It considers both the effectiveness of collaboration as well as the agency's capacity to engage in and sustain collaboration.

C. Evaluation

Survey respondents' perspectives on the effectiveness of collaborations is described first; the agency's ability to initiate and sustain collaboration is discussed second.

*Effectiveness of Collaboration*¹⁰

The effectiveness of collaboration was measured according to three findings. These included responses to: 1) an open-ended question on strengths of collaboration, 2) an open-ended question on weaknesses of collaboration, and 3) a question on satisfaction with process outcomes.

Eighty-two respondents commented on an open-ended question about strengths of collaboration; these responses were sorted into "general strengths" and "outcomes." Table 15 outlines the various themes within each category. For example, looking at column 1, of

⁹ Stakeholder Types: 1) Federal Agency, 2) Native American Tribe, 3) State Agency, 4) Elected Official, 5) Special District, 6) Local Agency, 7) Resource Extraction Industry, 8) Motorized Recreation, 9) Non-Motorized Recreation, 10) Environmental Group, 11) Agricultural Individual, 12) Private Property Rights, 13) Academic, 14) Journalist, 15) General Public

¹⁰ Data for this section comes primarily from open-ended questions and was coded using NVIOV, a software program for analyzing qualitative software.

responses coded under general strengths, avoiding future problems (e.g., appeals and litigation) and economic benefits/joint gains were mentioned by 12%, while increased participation opportunities was cited by 11%, and finding common ground by 7%.

Table 15: Themes in Open-Ended Question addressing Strengths of Collaborative Planning (n=82)*

General Strengths	Resp. %	Outcome Product-Oriented	Resp. %	Outcomes Process-Oriented	Resp. %
Avoid Future Problems	12	Political Support	34	Relational	18
Economic Benefit/Joint Gain	12	Plan/Project	21	Information/Ideas	15
Participation Opportunities	11			Learning	12
Create Common Ground	7			Ownership	12

* Total exceeds 100% because respondent comments may have been coded into more than one theme.

In terms of outcomes, responses were divided into product or process-oriented. Looking first at product-oriented outcomes, 34% coded into this theme mentioned that a strength of collaboration was the political support generated for consensus-based decisions. As one respondent explained, collaboration results in “broad-based buy-in for the process and the decisions,” leading to “support from the different levels of government and citizen groups if done correctly” (R. 103). Nearly a quarter of respondents cited plan development and project implementation as another strength. Eighty-eight percent of these respondents qualified their answer, stating that it produces a higher quality output. One respondent expressed it, “collaboration . . . usually results in a more thoroughly prepared planning strategy, document, [and/or] decision” (R. 2).

Numerous respondents (51) described strengths of collaboration that were coded as process-oriented. Eighteen percent of responses cited relationship building as an important process-oriented outcome. In terms of information and ideas, 15% felt that collaboration resulted in what one respondent explained as “better information and useful data for both the government and the communities” (R. 39). Twelve percent of respondents felt that a significant process outcome was that stakeholders learn from one another; another 12% stated that it results in “more ownership in the outcome” (R. 95).

While respondents were fairly positive about the strengths of collaboration, they also cited a number of weaknesses or problems with this alternative decision making process. Several themes arose from the 81 documents coded as weaknesses, which are presented in Table 16.

Table 16: Themes in Open-Ended Question addressing Weaknesses of Collaborative Planning (n=81)*

General Weaknesses	Resp. %	Collaboration	Resp. %	Participation	Resp. %
Time	68	Process	28	Involvement	22
BLM/Local Issues	31	Priorities	10	Power	21
BLM (FO/NO) Issues	15	Consensus	9	Commitment	20
Funding	15	Definition	5		

* Total exceeds 100% because respondent comments may have been coded into more than one theme.

The most oft cited weakness of collaboration was time, with 68% of respondents expressing frustration at the lack of flexibility in the planning process for collaboration processes. This respondent’s statement reflects the majority perspective on the issue: “collaboration takes time; we’re being asked to complete our plans in a hurry, which is at cross purposes with collaboration” (R. 106). The other general weaknesses, including tensions between BLM and local participants (e.g., local government and the general public), as well as issues

between field offices and national offices and funding are discussed in greater detail in the capacity section of evaluation.

There were several weaknesses mentioned that are specifically related to collaboration. Twenty-eight percent of responses critiqued the process for reasons such as ambiguities about when to conclude deliberations and begin developing alternatives; and not having the process meet participants' expectations. Other weaknesses related to the collaborative process included priorities (e.g., conflicting priorities, individual agendas and preconceived solutions), consensus (e.g., not reaching it or producing weak decisions), and definitions (e.g., agreeing on what collaboration is, what it means, and what it produces). Another weakness of collaboration mentioned by respondents had to do with participation. Twenty-two percent of responses described issues related to involvement, while 21% mentioned issues of power, and 20% noted problems with participant commitment. In terms of involvement, many respondents lamented the difficulty of "not being able to get the right entities to the table" (R. 108). And even if an office is successful at including all relevant stakeholders, often it can be challenging to keep them there. As one respondent remarked, "over time the energy and enthusiasm for the collaborative effort seems to wane. It is difficult to bring new players up to speed as people come and go in the process" (R. 124). According to at least a quarter of respondents, the issue of power was described as a weakness of collaboration. Two aspects of power were mentioned, one focused on the power that some stakeholders have over others, either as a result of their status (e.g., political clout or connections) or by their unwillingness to compromise on their personal agendas. The other aspect of power mentioned was that held by the national and state office staff, who, while not participating in collaborative processes, have the power to either approve or veto decisions. In a couple of instances, decisions arrived at through a collaborative process at the field office level have not been approved by higher-level administrators in the agency. This has caused problems for field office-community relations.

A final consideration of the effectiveness of collaboration was the level of staff satisfaction with various outcomes. When asked to describe their level of satisfaction with the collaborative arrangements outcomes, respondents tended to be satisfied with both process and product-oriented outcomes. For example, as shown in Table 16, 80% of the respondents were satisfied with the level of trust that had developed, while 63% were satisfied with resource management plans that the collaborative had produced.

Table 17: Level of Satisfaction with Arrangement Outcomes

Outcome (no. of respondents)*	Dissatisfied (%)	Neutral (%)	Satisfied (%)	D/K (%)	Total (%)
Develop Trust (n=44)	4	14	80	2	100
Develop Res. Mngt. Plan (n=30)	0	27	63	10	100
Develop Land Use Plan (n=29)	3	24	45	28	100
Develop Amendment (n=24)	4	25	50	21	100
Develop Policy (n=25)	0	24	68	8	100
Complete Project n=31)	0	19	68	13	100

* The number of respondents varies because not all respondents could answer each question; in some cases their arrangement had not produced a particular outcome yet, in others it was not a goal.

Overall, respondents tended to be satisfied with the outcomes of the collaborative arrangements with which they were involved. In describing strengths of collaboration, they mentioned avoidance of future problems and creation of common ground. Responses suggest that the strength of collaboration lies not only in producing politically supported and higher-

quality outputs, but also in building relationships, increasing joint learning and instilling a sense of ownership among the participants in the process and product. Respondents also described numerous weaknesses of collaboration. Specifically, they mentioned concerns about the process itself, its definition, explicit and hidden agendas, and reaching consensus. Others mentioned weaknesses related to participation in terms of involvement, commitment and power. General weaknesses included time and lack of funding, and relations between field offices and local communities, and field offices and state and national offices. These issues will be addressed in greater detail in the following section, which considers question of organizational capacity for engaging in collaborative planning processes.

Capacity for Collaboration

Several organizational capacity issues are examined which may hinder and/or facilitate field offices' ability to collaborate; these are related not only to internal issues like adequate funding, time, and staff, but also external issues related to the community's knowledge and willingness to participate.

Overall, respondents thought there was a high level of support for collaborative planning within the agency. Seventy-five percent stated that there was a high degree of support at the field office level, 79% felt support was high at the state level, and 66% felt its was high at the national office. While support for the general concept is significant, this does not necessarily translate into material support. Fifty-two percent of respondents disagreed with the statement that the BLM's budget process supported collaborative planning. In response to a question asking whether field offices financially supported collaborative planning, joint planning, or outside facilitation more respondents stated that their office did not provide financial assistance for any of these activities (see Table 17).

Table 18: Activities Financially Supported by Field Offices

Financial Support for (no. of respondents)**	Cases* (%)
Collaborative Planning (n=18)	38
Joint Planning (n=11)	23
Outside Facilitation (n=17)	36
No Support (n=19)	40

*Total exceeds 100% because respondents could select more than one option.

** The number of respondents varies because not every respondent to the survey answered this question.

* For this question in particular, it shows that there is little financial support for non-traditional planning activities.

Open-ended questions also provide qualitative insights. According to respondents who answered these questions, there are several factors that could be changed to increase the capacity of field offices to use collaborative planning and to sustain collaborative arrangements. When asked what support would be helpful, a number of suggestions were made. Several themes emerge from these comments, which are presented in Table 18.

Table 19: Additional Support for Encouraging Collaborative Planning in Field Offices

Theme	Respondents (%)*(N=22)
Financial Support	41
Time	27
Staffing	23
Understanding at S.O./N.O. Level	18

*Total exceeds 100% because respondents may have mentioned more than one theme.

Of the 22 written responses to a question about additional support, 41% discussed the need for increased financial assistance and a more flexible budget process. As one respondent explained, “a successful collaborative effort can not be launched and implemented within one budget cycle” (R. 83). In several instances, time and financial resources were referred to simultaneously, as evidenced by the following comment: “There is frequently too much pressure and too little funding to accomplish what needs to be done in too short a time frame” (R. 108). The 23% who referred to staffing support mentioned both the need for additional staff, as well as education for current staff. Finally, 18% of respondents mentioned a lack of follow-through on promises for support from the state and national offices. According to one respondent, “this administration has promised a lot [but] not come through . . . we’ve come not to expect much” (R. 42). Another respondent stated that “community collaborative planning get[s] lip service only above the State Office and seems to be the catch phrase of the higher level administration” (R. 38).

The agency has taken some steps to increase staff’s capacity for collaboration by offering workshops on various topics at the National Training Center (NTC). As shown in Table 19, over half of respondents have attended one or two workshops offered by the NTC.

Table 20: Number of Workshops Attended

Number of Workshops	Cases (%) (n=41)
No Workshops	17
1-2 Workshops	51
3-4 Workshops	20
5+ Workshops	5
Don’t Know	7
Total	100

The top workshops attended were: “Successful Land Use Planning,” “Community-based Planning and Ecosystems,” and “Facilitator Skills.” While this resource is available to field office staff, 17% of the respondents have not yet attended a NTC workshop. Training, however, is not sufficient for assuring adoption of collaborative planning, as is apparent from this response: “Collaborative planning was introduced to the office through a training session. I have not observed the use of collaborative planning to that degree since the training. It takes time to change old habits” (R. 12).

While the BLM is undoubtedly responsible for ensuring its own capacity to collaborate, its ability to engage in collaboration is affected by the competence of potential stakeholders. The capacity of local stakeholders is impacted by their knowledge of the agency’s responsibilities and the issues, commitment and ability to participate in the process, personal agendas and personalities, as well as their trust of the agency. Referring to local knowledge, one respondent remarked, that they spend considerable effort “bring[ing] participants up to speed on the scope of the effort, the process, the authorities, etc., before . . . working on the issue” (R. 74). A primary issue regarding commitment is “sparking and maintaining [their] interest throughout the planning process” (R. 33). In terms of staff turnover, one respondent explained that “changing elected officials or agency representatives can sometimes bring planning to a halt in order to bring new people on board with planning processes” (R. 39). Furthermore, staff are challenged with ensuring that certain stakeholders do not dominate the process. According to a respondent, “success depends in large part on the personalities involved” (R. 22). The BLM also has to deal with stereotypes held by some stakeholders.

“The public thinks we have our minds made up already” (R. 95), and there is “distrust at the local level that the federal government will actually allow local decisions to be made and implemented” (R. 6).

In summary, while collaboration has received much verbal support within recent BLM publications, from upper administrators in the agency, and from the Secretary’s Office in the Department of Interior, there appears to be little material support. If collaborative planning is to be utilized, staff stated they need more time, greater budget flexibility, additional training and genuine support from state and national offices. It is also apparent from the survey that despite concrete steps that the agency may take to increase its capacity for collaboration, it will continue to face challenges with respect to other stakeholders’ ability to collaborate.

Part III: Discussion & Conclusions

The following discussion applies insights and analysis to the findings described above. It also offers recommendations with respect to the continued use of collaboration in agency decision-making processes.

Intergovernmental Coordination

The findings generated from the intergovernmental coordination section of the survey verify that BLM field offices are coordinating a number of activities with other government units. Some amount of coordination is required by Federal Land Policy and Management Act (1976), however the extent of coordination occurring between BLM field offices and other entities goes far beyond the stated requirements. The Service First program, a joint venture between the BLM and USFS, is a prime example of this type of collaborative integration. In some areas where these agencies have lands nearby, they are providing “one stop shopping” for the public, who can make one phone call or stop in at one office to get questions answered about all federal lands (e.g., public and national forests) in their area.

According to the literature on collaboration, organizations with coordination and collaboration experience are more likely to engage in collaboration in the future (Gray 1985). Prior interactions provide information about other entities in terms of their reliability, capabilities and trustworthiness (Gulati, Dialdin, and Wang 2002). Furthermore, Cigler (1994) found that the degree of practical experience in formal and informal inter-organizational coordination and cooperation increases the readiness of institutions to engage in future collaborative efforts (Cigler 1994). Based on these previous findings, it seems that BLM field offices may have a relatively high level of institutional readiness for continued engagement in collaboration, particularly with other government entities.

Collaborative Process Characteristics

Three areas within arrangement characteristics are discussed here in more detail: participation, goals and issues.

One factor debated both in the literature and among respondents is the question of optimal group size. Some scholars argue for intensive participation by a small number of stakeholders who are intimately connected to the issue (Flynn and Harbin 1987); while others argue for an extensive process that encourages participation of all interested stakeholders

(Gray 1989). While the majority of arrangements described in the survey were moderate in size (11-20 participants), one respondent seemed to favor the former opinion explaining that, “as long as you can keep the number of stakeholders down to a limited number . . . it does keep the process moving along” (R. 114). Another respondent aligned with the latter view, stating that, “each additional partner brings more diversity to the planning group” (R. 72). According to Luke (1998), there is no “magic” group size. Rather, what is important is that 1) the diversity of viewpoints and perspectives reflects the complexity of the issue, 2) the group is large enough to include those considered critical to implementation, but small enough to develop agreement, and 3) there are various levels of participation opportunities (Luke 1998, 76). Therefore, field office staff should focus on the types of stakeholders involved, ensuring that the breadth of participants corresponds to the complexity of the issues being addressed. Studies have shown that the more diverse the base of stakeholders, the more likely that the outcomes will be accepted by most stakeholders, and the process be considered fair (Lawrence 1997; Smith and McDonough 2001). In addition, they should realize that not all interested stakeholders need to attend each meeting. Layers of involvement can be designed, which allow stakeholders to be engaged in the process to the degree that they have time and are interested (Luke 1998).

Turning to goals, high numbers of respondents selected social-oriented (e.g., developing trust, reducing conflict) and product-oriented goals over planning goals (see Table 7). This finding suggests that goals may be associated with stages, which falls in line both with what survey respondents stated in open-ended questions and with what others have found (Lachapelle, McCool, and Patterson 2003). Therefore, it may be necessary for field office staff to first reach stage 1 goals of building trust, reducing conflict and actively engage participants in on-the-ground projects prior to engaging in stage 2 goals of developing plans or policies. This finding corroborates respondent comments about community participants’ ability to collaborate. Respondents mentioned both the need to spend time initially bringing participants “up to speed” and building trust between the agency and the public before beginning to work on the issues at hand. Lachapelle et al (2003) suggested a similar explanation stating that it is important to first “encourage the potential for people to practice civic means of association, stressing dialogue and relationship building” prior to addressing complex problems. Thus it appears that collaborative process goals occur in stages; first stage goal are social and project-oriented, while second stage goals are planning-oriented.

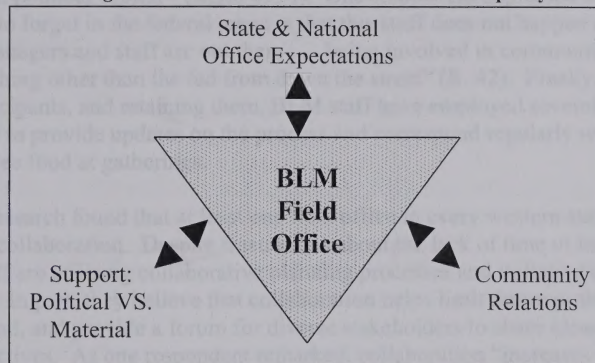
In terms of issue foci, respondents tended to select those that could more easily be addressed locally and/or lend themselves to on-the-ground projects (e.g., water quality, wildlife habitat, livestock grazing) (see Table 8). Whereas issues not considered major such as energy development and air quality tend to be influenced by regional or national activities, and are more susceptible to forces beyond to the local collaborative process. For example, due to the “national energy crisis,” which is creating tremendous pressure for increased energy development in the Rocky Mountain West, decisions made in Washington, D.C. are greatly impacting field office level decisions (Ring 2003). Recent developments in the Roan Plateau of western Colorado starkly illustrate this point. Over a 2-year planning process to develop a natural gas leasing plan, the BLM field office, in conjunction with the local community, agreed on “Alternative F.” Months later, the agency withdrew the alternative, explaining that it would cost too much to evaluate so many alternatives. Participants in the process criticize

the agency for forsaking the “cooperative process to bring its plans into line with the agenda of the Bush administration” (Zaffos 2003, 6). This anecdote, in conjunction with survey results suggests that there may be some issues that are more appropriate for collaboration than others.

Capacity for Collaboration

A final topic of discussion relates to field offices’ capacity to collaborate. This research has uncovered three issues that may hinder BLM field offices’ ability to initiate and sustain collaboration: 1) political vs. material support, 2) field office efforts vs. national office expectations, and 3) field office - local community relations (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Hindrances to BLM Collaborative Capacity



With respect to support, the agency appears to promote collaboration in publications and national speeches, however when it comes to providing material support, there seems to be little payout. As one respondent lamented, “frequently the implied support doesn’t materialize” (R. 46). The second gap is between field offices and the state and national offices. There appear to be misconceptions across the agency as to what collaboration is and how to implement it. For example, one respondent criticized the state and national offices for “not seem[ing] to care about or value the relationships that we are trying to develop at the local level. [They] seem more inclined to use the same cookie cutter on each action and not really care about the local needs” (R. 20). The third gap is between the BLM and local communities. In many cases, there appears to be a lack of understanding regarding agency mandates and responsibilities, a level of distrust toward the agency, and difficulty in engaging and retaining committed participants.

There are several actions the agency can take to “bridge” these gaps. To address the first two, support and intra-agency relations, field office employees with collaborative planning experience could offer workshops for state and national administrators that demonstrate collaborative planning in action, and show what it requires in terms of time and financial commitment. In turn, staff at the national and state offices might consider participating in a field office led collaborative planning process in order to gain first hand experience. They should also determine what the agency expects from the process and work with field office staff to revise budget processes and planning timeframes to make them more responsive to

the collaborative planning process. Furthermore, higher-level administrators need to provide field office staff with assurances that decisions and alternatives reached at the field office level through collaborative processes will be considered with as much care and concern as decisions arrived at through more traditional processes.

To bridge the gap between field offices and communities, survey respondents suggested numerous solutions including: actively educating the public and local government, becoming personally involved in the community, and finding creative ways to increase commitment to the process. In terms of community education, one office has “provide[d] local and outside training on issues, [and] brought in national experts” (R. 99). In another office, staff have become personally involved in their communities, which aids in the development of social, intellectual and political capital¹¹ (Innes 1994). One respondent expressed it this way: “the thing we tend to forget in the federal arena is that this stuff does not happen successfully unless your managers and staff are out there . . . being involved in community efforts . . . We must be something other than the fed from down the street” (R. 42). Finally, with respect to engaging participants, and retaining them, BLM staff have employed several methods such as utilizing email to provide updates on the process and correspond regularly with participants and offering free food at gatherings.

Overall, this research found that at least one field office in every western state is engaged in some form of collaboration. Despite frustrations about the lack of time or budgetary flexibility, staff are utilizing collaborative planning processes and initiating collaborative arrangements. In part, they believe that collaboration helps limit future problems, create common ground, and provide a forum for diverse stakeholders to share ideas and understand others’ perspectives. As one respondent remarked, collaboration “increases overall understanding of [the] BLM’[s] situation, goals and abilities. [And it] allows BLM to better understand others needs/expectations” (R. 92). However, some respondents did suggest that collaboration may not be applicable in all situations. According to one respondent, “depending on the scope, scale constraints, level of decision, and intent of the planning initiative, collaborative planning may not be the process of choice” (R. 23).

Findings in this report suggest a cautionary optimism about the use and role of collaboration in BLM field offices’ planning processes. In places where staff have worked to build trust and reduce conflict with local stakeholders, and have developed clear boundaries about their legal responsibilities (e.g., final decision making authority), collaborative processes have resulted in satisfactory outcomes. However, collaboration takes a great deal of time and commitment on the parts of field office staff and stakeholders. If there is a lack of commitment on either side of the equation, it could lead to major disappointment and frustration. It seems that until real changes are made to planning budgets and time schedules, and there is greater agreement across levels of the agency as to what collaboration is and what it can produce, it is likely to remain a process that is not agency-wide but adopted by those offices where there are committed people willing to take the time and risks to make it happen.

¹¹ Social capital is defined as “trust, norms of behavior, and networks of communication,” which create the potential for discussion among otherwise conflicting actors; intellectual capital is “agreed upon facts, shared problem definitions, and mutual understanding,” which provides a common basis for discussion and moves actors toward agreement on issues; political capital is “alliances and agreements on proposals that provide mutual gain,” which make it possible to adopt and implement proposals (Innes, et al 1994).

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APPENDIX A:

On-line Survey Administered to BLM Field Office Managers and Planners via Formsite.com

INTRODUCTION:

Dear Participant, Welcome to the online-survey designed for BLM field office managers and lead planners. The objective of the survey is to assess the planning relationship between federal land management agency staff, other government entities, and the community. In particular, this survey focuses on examining the role of community-based planning at the field office level.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time. Moreover, you have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) for any reason. By participating in this survey, you are giving your implied consent.

In the dissemination of the results, ALL RESPONSES WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL. This means that your identification will not be revealed in any reports or other documents published from this research. All data will be discussed in the aggregate. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! It should take approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Sincerely, Tamara J. Laninga, PhD Candidate, University of Colorado.

Select the state in which your office is located.

1) Alaska 2) Arizona 3) California 4) Colorado 5) Idaho 6) Kansas 7) Mississippi 8) Montana 9) Nebraska 10) Nevada 11) New Mexico 12) North Dakota 13) Oklahoma 14) Oregon 15) South Dakota 16) Texas 17) Utah 18) Washington 19) Wisconsin 20) Wyoming

What field office do you work in?

What is your job title?

PART I: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION & PLANNING

1. The following set of questions describe a number of planning and management activities that your office may coordinate with other government entities. Please mark the activities and the government entity with which your office regularly coordinates.

The term "LOCAL," in the following matrices, refers to other types of entities that you may interact with such as an irrigation district, weed district, or rural fire district.

A. Check the appropriate government entity or entities with which you share any of the following OPERATING CAPACITIES.

	City	County	Local	State	Tribal	Federal	D/K ¹²
Road Maintenance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prescribed Burns	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wildfire Control	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Law Enforcement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Search and Rescue	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trail & Campground Maintenance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Weed Control	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cadastral Management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wildlife Management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please describe "other" here:

¹² Don't Know

B. Check the appropriate government entity or entities with which you coordinate any of the following LAND USE and INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING activities.

	City	County	Local	State	Tribal	Federal	D/K
Location of Utility Corridor	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Location of New Roads	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Location of New Development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Location of Communication Sites	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Location of Oil/Gas/Coalbed Methane Wells	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Location of Mineral Extraction	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Location of Recreation Trails & Infrastructure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coordination of Land Exchanges	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dev. of Growth Mngt Plan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dev. of Comp/Gen. Plan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dev. of Wildfire Strategic Plan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please describe "other" here:

C. Check the appropriate LOCAL government entity with which you coordinate any of the following OPEN SPACE PLANNING/MANAGEMENT activities:

	City	County	Local	D/K
Open Space Planning	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recreation Planning/Mngt	☐	☐	☐	☐
Species Habitat Protection	☐	☐	☐	☐
Urban Growth Management	☐	☐	☐	☐
Farm/Ranch Land Preservation	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please describe "other" here:

D. Check the appropriate government entity or entities that have, in the last ten years, leased or purchased land from the BLM for any of the following community facilities through the Recreation and Public Purposes program.

	City	County	Local	State	Tribal	Federal	D/K
Landfill	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fire Station	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Law Enforcement Facilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Government Facilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Historic Monument Site	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hospital	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Campground	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fairgrounds	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
School Site	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please describe "other" here:

E. Please describe any additional planning or management activities your office coordinates with other government entities that have not been addressed in the previous questions.

2. The following list outlines a number of administrative and procedural arrangements.

A. Please mark the arrangements that your office coordinates with other government entities.

	City	County	Local	State	Tribal	Federal	D/K
Id. of Research and Data Needs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Information Exchange	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Joint Data Collection	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Review & Comment on Draft Plans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Co-Sponsor Education & Public Input Forums	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jointly Fund Plan/Project	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cooperating Agency on EA/EIA	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Co-located Staff Position or Shared Position	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please describe "other" here:

B. Does your office participate in the Service First program with the U.S. Forest Service?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know

C. Is your office currently developing a plan for any of the following specially designated areas?

National Conservation Area

National Wild & Scenic River

National Historic or Scenic Trail

National Recreation Areas

National Monument

No, We Are Not

Don't Know

Other (please specify):

PART II: COMMUNITY-BASED, COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

3. Does your field office regularly work with a Resource Advisory Council (RAC) or other advisory group when developing land use or resource management plans?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know

4. Is your office participating in a collaborative planning process, not associated with a RAC? A community-based, collaborative planning process is defined here as a cooperative process in which diverse stakeholders work together to seek solutions to resource management issues involving public lands.

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know

If NO, you will be taken to the final page of the survey.

If YES, please indicate how many collaborative processes your field office is currently participating in:

If you are involved in more than one collaborative process, please use ONLY ONE for answering the following questions.

A. Who initiated the collaborative process?

Your Office

Local Government

A Non-governmental Organization

Local Citizen

Don't Know

Other:

B. When was the collaborative process initiated? (month/year)

C. If your collaborative process has a name, please provide it here:

D. Using the pull-down menu, specify how frequently the group meets.

1) Weekly 2) Twice a Month 3) Once a Month 4) Once a Quarter 5) Twice a Year 6) On an as Needed Basis 7) Annually 8) Don't Know

E. The following list describes several possible goals for a collaborative planning process. Please check whether each is a primary or secondary goal, or is not applicable (N/A) for your process.

	Primary	Secondary	N/A	D/K
Resolve Conflict	☐	☐	☐	☐
Joint Fact-Finding	☐	☐	☐	☐
Build Trust Among Stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐
Address Specific Issue	☐	☐	☐	☐
Address Multiple Issues	☐	☐	☐	☐
Develop Resource Management Plan	☐	☐	☐	☐
Develop Land Use Plan	☐	☐	☐	☐
Develop Policy	☐	☐	☐	☐
Complete on-the-ground project	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Goal	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please describe "other goal" here:

F. Listed below are a number of topics which your collaborative process may be focused on. Please check whether a topic is a major or minor focus, or not applicable (N/A) for your process.

	Major	Minor	N/A	D/K
Air Quality	☐	☐	☐	☐
Visual Resources	☐	☐	☐	☐
Water Quality	☐	☐	☐	☐
Watershed Health	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rangeland Health	☐	☐	☐	☐
Forest Health	☐	☐	☐	☐
Noxious Weeds	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wildfire	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cultural/Archeological Resources	☐	☐	☐	☐
Special Status Plant Species	☐	☐	☐	☐
Special Status Animal Species	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fish/Aquatic Habitat	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wildlife Habitat	☐	☐	☐	☐
Timber Harvesting	☐	☐	☐	☐
Livestock Grazing	☐	☐	☐	☐
Motorized Recreation	☐	☐	☐	☐
Non-motorized Recreation	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coal & Oil Shale Development	☐	☐	☐	☐
Oil & Gas, Geothermal, Coalbed	☐	☐	☐	☐
Methane Development	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mineral Development	☐	☐	☐	☐
Private Development in Wildland-	☐	☐	☐	☐
Urban Interface	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other Focus of Collaborative Process	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please describe "other focus" here:

G. In the collaborative process, how is agreement reached?

☐ Consensus ☐ Majority Vote ☐ Don't Know ☐ Other (please specify):

H. What is the geographic scope of the process?

Agency's Administrative Boundary

County

Region

Watershed

Don't Know

Other delineation:

I. What is the group's timeframe for achieving the goals of the process?

Short-term (6 months to 3 years)

Intermediate (3 to 10 years)

Long-term (10 to 20+ years)

Don't Know

Other (please specify):

J. Which of the following best describes the collaborative process you are involved in?

☐ Community-based (watershed council, dialogue group, partnership; focused on more than one problem/issue; open membership)

☐ Intergovernmental (cooperation/coordination between two or more government entities; may range from information exchange to joint planning and/or joint implementation of plan/project)

☐ Mediated Negotiation (facilitated by neutral party to resolve specific dispute; participation limited to representatives of groups involved in dispute)

☐ Don't Know

Other (please specify):

K. Has the group formalized its relationship through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding or some other binding agreement, or has the group remained informal?

☐ Informal ☐ Formal ☐ Don't Know

Other (please specify):

5. The following questions cover topics related to types of data, data sources, and computer technology used for decision making in the collaborative process.

A. What kinds of data are used in the collaborative process? Check all that apply.

Spatial Data

Resource Inventory Data

On-going Monitoring Data

Social/Economic Data

Local Value Surveys

Focus Groups

Interviews/Anecdotal Experience

Don't Know

Other (please specify):

B. What are the sources of the data used in the collaborative process? Check all that apply.

Internal

City

County

State

Tribal

Other Federal

Private Consulting Firm

University

Commodity Group

Environmental Group

Citizen/Community Group

K-12 School Group

Don't Know

Other (please specify):

C. Which of the following spatial processing software do you use? Check all that apply.

ArcView 3.x

ARC/INFO

ArcGIS

ERDAS/Imagine

Don't Use Any

Don't Know

Other (please specify):

D. What is the source of your spatial data? Check all that apply.

Internally generated

City

County

State

Tribal

Other Federal

Non-Governmental Orgnaization

University

Don't Know

Other (please specify):

E. Are you using spatial data standards? Check all that apply.

Local Data Standards

State Data Standards

National Data Standards

No, We Are Not

Don't Know

Other Agency Data Standards (please specify):

F. How are you using spatial data? Check all that apply.

Issue Scoping

Alternative Formulation

NEPA Analysis

Resource Analysis

Decision Support

Preparing maps for Planning Documents

Preparing Maps for Public Meetings

Interactive Visualization

Don't Know

Not Applicable

Other (please specify):

G. Do you use decision support or planning support software in the planning process (e.g., Nobility, Carat)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't Know

If yes, please list the software you use here:

6. The following set of questions focus on who participates in the collaborative process.

A. Approximately how many people regularly attend group meetings?

B. How do participants become involved in the process?

Elected

Assigned

Self-Selected

Don't Know

Other (please specify):

C. From the list below, mark those participants who are actively involved in the process:

FEDERAL Agencies and Officials
 Army Corps of Engineers
 Bureau of Land Management
 Bureau of Reclamation
 Department of Defense
 Environmental Protection Agency
 Federal Emergency Management Agency
 Fish & Wildlife Service
 Native American Tribal Organization
 National Park Service
 National Resource Conservation Service
 USDA Forest Service
 Congressional Representative
 Don't Know
 None Involved
 Other:

STATE Agencies and Officials
 Department of Natural Resources
 Fish & Wildlife
 Department of Forestry
 Department of Agriculture
 State Lands Department
 Oil and Gas Department
 Mines & Mineral Resources Department
 Environmental Quality or Environment Department
 Water Resources
 Public Utilities Commission
 Health Department
 Emergency Management
 Department of Transportation
 State Parks
 State Historic Preservation Office
 Cultural Resources Department
 Tourism
 Housing, Community or Economic Development
 Office
 Legislative Representative
 Governor
 None Involved
 Don't Know
 Other:

LOCAL Agencies and Officials
 Resource Conservation District
 Water Supply District
 Irrigation District
 Flood Control District
 Rural Fire District
 Weed District
 Cooperative Extension Service
 Public Utility District
 Sheriff's Department
 Parks and Recreation Department
 County Open Space
 City Open Space
 Environmental Health Department
 City Mayor
 City Council Member
 County Commissioner
 None Involved
 Don't Know
 Other:

PRIVATE Groups or Individuals
 Forest Products/Logging Company
 Mining Company
 Oil/Gas Company
 Commercial Recreation
 Individual Fishing/Hunting Interests
 Motorized Recreational Interest Group or Individual
 (e.g., ORV/ATV riders, four-wheel drive interest)
 Non-motorized Recreational Interest Group or
 Individual (e.g., hiking, mountain biking, bird
 watching, rock/mineral hounding, etc.)
 National Environmental Group
 Local/Grassroots Environmental Group or
 Individual
 Property Rights Advocacy Group or Individual
 Building Industry Representative or Developer
 Cultural Resources Advocacy Group or Individual
 Academic/Research Facility Representative
 Farmer
 Rancher
 Land Trust Organization
 Journalist
 General Public
 None Involved
 Don't Know
 Other:

D. Has your office used techniques to increase the level of participation by stakeholders in the collaborative process? Check all that apply.

Meetings held at different times and places

Information/Education Workshops

Planning Charettes (short, intense, collaborative process used to design projects and/or build consensus)

Field Trips

Community/Social Events (e.g., potluck, picnic)

Newsletter

Email Updates on Process

Project Website

No, We Have Not

Don't Know

Other:

7. The following questions describe possible outcomes of the collaborative process. Select those outcomes you have reached in your process, indicating your degree of satisfaction with the result.

	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	D/K
Developed Trust Among Stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Developed Resource Management Plan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Developed Land Use Plan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Developed Amendment to Existing Plan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Developed Policy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Completed On-the-ground Project	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please briefly describe "other outcome" here:

8. The following set of questions address the BLM's support for collaborative, community-based planning.

A. Does your office specifically designate funds for any of the following activities?

Collaborative Planning

Joint Plan Implementation

Outside Facilitation

No, It Doesn't

Don't Know

Other (please specify):

B. For the following questions, rank your level of agreement with the statement:

The BLM's budget supports:	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	D/K
Collaborative Planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Long-Term Planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Multi-jurisdictional Planning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adaptive Management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

C. Throughout the collaborative planning process, approximately how many staff have participated?

D. Which of the following workshops offered by the National Training Center (NTC) have you attended? Check all that apply.

Alternative Funding: Beyond Traditional Sources

Basic Volunteer Administration

Building a High Performance Team

Community-based Partnerships and Ecosystems: Ensuring Healthy Environments

Facilitator Skills

Any of the Leadership Series Courses (e.g., Leadership Challenge; Community & Leadership for the 21st Century)

Learning Community: Linking People, Place and Person

Successful Land Use Planning

Project Management for Planners

I Have Not Attended Any NTC Workshops

Don't Know

Other (please specify):

E. How would you rate the level of support for collaborative planning in:

	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low	Non-Existent	D/K
Your Field Office	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
State Director's Office	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
National Office	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

F. What additional assistance or support would be helpful for encouraging collaborative planning in your field office?

G. Please check whether you think the following laws are instrumental in facilitating collaborative planning processes, have no effect, or hinder collaborative planning processes.

	Facilitates	No Effect	Hinders	D/K
Endangered Species Act	☐	☐	☐	☐
National Environmental Policy Act	☐	☐	☐	☐
Antiquities Act	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part III. GENERAL QUESTIONS ON COLLABORATIVE PLANNING - FINAL PAGE!

9. What problems have you encountered with the collaborative planning approach? How have you addressed these problems?

10. Please describe your experience working with local government in collaborative planning.

11. Given your experience, what do you think are the strengths of collaborative planning?

12. Given your experience, what do you think are the weaknesses of collaborative planning?

13. Please provide additional comments on collaborative planning that you feel were not addressed in this survey.

THANK YOU for participating in this survey. Would you like an electronic copy of the final results?

☐ Yes ☐ No Provide Email Address Here:

For my records only, please provide your Name, Office Address and Phone Number. (Reminder: ALL INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL).

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